ANNUAL REPORT 2003/4  
OF THE  
CARIBBEAN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Abbreviations

CCDC    Caribbean Child Development Centre  
ChIC    Children’s Issues Coalition  
ECD    Early Childhood Development  
RRP    Regional Radio Project  
T-C    Tutor-Coordinator

Overview

The Caribbean Child Development Centre (CCDC) is a specialised unit of the School of Continuing Studies of the University of the West Indies. The unit was established in 1973, with funding from UNICEF, to serve as a regional centre for research and training in early childhood education and care. The focus of activities of the CCDC have varied over time within the areas of research, training, curriculum development and advocacy/policy development, depending on demand, responsiveness to perceived needs and interests, and funding availability.

The academic year 2003/4 was a milestone one for the Centre. After over 20 years at the CCDC, Tutor-Coordinator Janet Brown retired on January 31st, 2004. Mrs Brown first joined the staff of the CCDC as Social Worker in 1981 during which time she designed and implemented demonstration projects, and assisted with parenting education training, curricula development and research. She assumed the post of Tutor-Coordinator in 1985 and continued in that post until her retirement. She carried out a range of activities in her specialised areas of Early Childhood Education, Parenting Education and the Role of Fathers in the Caribbean family, including curriculum development and assessment, national and regional policy development, development of regional networks and national training standards and accreditation systems. She published extensively, and her publications included books on gender socialization, a parenting manual and chapters on Caribbean parenthood and fathering. She also provided technical experience within the Caribbean region through a number of consultancies with international agencies and various Foundations. She is leaving behind a Centre which has developed a regional and international reputation for pertinent research in the areas of early childhood education, parenting and gender issues, and for outstanding technical support for Caribbean countries in developing their early childhood programmes.

Dr Julie Meeks Gardner was appointed as the new T-C, and took up part-time duties on March 15th, and full-time duties since July 1st 2004. Dr Meeks Gardner was previously Senior Lecturer in the Epidemiology Research Unit of the Tropical Medicine Research Institute, UWI, where she carried out extensive research on child nutrition, development and...
behaviour issues, published widely in international journals and contributed to the teaching of the MSc (Nutrition), MBBS (Nutrition) and BSc (Nursing) Human Nutrition courses, as well as supervised a number of graduate students. She comes to the CCDC with plans to support the ongoing work in regional capacity building in early childhood and qualitative research, as well as to strengthen the quantitative research and training functions of the centre.

Staffing

UWI Officers
Tutor-Coordinator: Mrs Janet Brown (until January 31, 2004)  
Dr Julie Meeks Gardner (since March 15, 2004)  
Office Manager: Mrs Marva Campbell (part-time since May 1, 2004)  
Mrs Claudette Sinclair (part-time since May 1, 2004)

Support staff (funded by MOEYC)
Secretary/ Clerk: Miss Marilyn Brown
Office Attendant: Mrs Hyacinth Wright
Groundsman: Mr Donald Thampson

Funding

The CCDC obtains support from the UWI through the School of Continuing Studies, and from a subvention from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (Government of Jamaica). The centre also generates a substantial portion of its own resources. One source is through the two organizations hosted on CCDC premises, the Kids on Campus preschool and after-school care centre and Parenting Partners, a non-governmental organization which focuses on parenting outreach. Both pay a monthly rental fee which supports general office expenditure and refurbishing of the plant. We also hosted the Dudley Grant Memorial Trust staff for the period February to April while their offices were refurbished. Additionally, fees are paid to the CCDC for the administration of projects.

Research

A new research thrust is being developed for the CCDC with a proposed 3-pronged research mandate focusing on violence/aggression and child development, HIV/AIDS and child outcomes, and child disabilities. The long-term goal is for the CCDC to become the hub of relevant, solution-oriented research on children’s issues in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. Dr Meeks Gardner has brought to the CCDC ongoing work on children and violence/aggression, and further work is planned in this area.

A UNESCO funded project to assess the needs of HIV/AIDS affected children was carried out in western Jamaica, and concluded in October 2003. This project was conducted in collaboration with the School of Continuing studies Western Jamaica Centre and UWI HARP, the UWI response programme to HIV/AIDS. This was the first look at the problem
of HIV/AIDS in the development of affected children in Jamaica, and the reports have been widely circulated. A research seminar to present these findings and other non-medical findings connected with children and HIV/AIDS is planned for late 2004 so that research priorities in the area of HIV/AIDS and child development can be determined prior to the development of the proposed research programme in this area.

Work carried out with the Children Issues Coalition has highlighted the dearth of recent Jamaican or Caribbean research in the area of children and disabilities. This is therefore another planned area for research development at the CCDC.

**Training**
In July 2003 of The Masters in Leadership in Early Childhood Development, a component of the Child Focus II project, was launched by the Institute of Education on 28th June 2004. This is a major development for training in ECD in the region. While there are a number of offerings for early childhood education at teachers’ colleges, and at both the bachelors’ and masters’ levels at various universities, no previous programme has focused on leadership. This programme will be targeted for senior practitioners in the field of early childhood to improve their theoretical background in early childhood issues and to acquire strong leadership skills. Twenty five students from seven Caribbean countries are participating in the pilot which is being carried out in the academic year 2004. The students attended their first three courses delivered as part of the summer programme on the Mona Campus June 28th to July 30th, 2004. Remaining courses will be provided on line during 2004/5.

The staff of the CCDC continued to offer training in a number of UWI courses this year including the BSc (Nursing) Human Nutrition, MBBS Human Nutrition, and MSc (Nutrition) courses, and non-UWI courses as follows:

**Janet Brown:**
Parenting and Parent Support Programmes in Jamaica and the Caribbean, Masters in Early Childhood Education, University of South Florida/Shortwood Teachers’ College, Jamaica, April 13th to 16th 2004

**Sian Williams:**
Policy Development and Financing of the early childhood development sector in Jamaica and the Caribbean, Masters in Early Childhood Education, University of South Florida/Shortwood Teachers’ College, Jamaica, April 13th to 16th 2004

**Julie Meeks Gardner** continued supervision of four UWI graduate students in the MSc (Nutrition), MSc (Biostatistics) and PhD (Psychology) programmes. Two MPH students carried out their 4 week practicum at the CCDC during May – June 2003 under the supervision of the T-C.

An associate degree in early childhood and another in the psychoeducational assessment of children have been proposed as areas for future development. An assessment of needs in these areas is planned to determine the viability of programmes addressing these topics.
Technical Assistance
The IDB funded Child Focus II Project which started in November 2001, was concluded on 30 June 2004. This project sought to increase public awareness and mobilize national commitment for ECD throughout the Caribbean. The project generated informed dialogue on key areas of public policy issues, based on the experiences and action-research in the priority countries, and strengthened a professional network of regional and national associations dedicated to supporting ECD. The public policy component addressed the following thematic areas: (a) legislation and standards; (b) sector financing and sustainability; (c) parent and public education; (d) curriculum development; and, (e) professional-level training. It was a significant part of a regional, multidisciplinary effort to find broadly applicable, cost-effective solutions to these policy constraints.

A proposal for a new project to focus on similar issues in non-IDB sponsored Caribbean countries was requested from the CCDC by the Caribbean Development Bank. This was developed and is under consideration for funding by the Bank.

Outreach
The Caribbean Early Childhood Development website project has continued through the CCDC, Dudley Grant Memorial Trust and the Institute of Education. The website continues to be a popular site visited by people in the region and from further afield who are interested in early childhood issues.

Parenting Partners continues to use facilities at the CCDC and to collaborate with CCDC staff. A new initiative, the Regional Radio Project (RRP) aims to increase the use of radio in broadcasting messages for improved parenting practices throughout the region. The RRP commenced in January 2004 and is anticipated to continue for 18 months.

The monthly lunch-time discussions on current child and family research organised by CCDC, the Friday Forum on Child Development and Parenting series continued during this year. Presenters were:

Prof Scott Minor
Systems of care treatment for children with serious emotional disturbance
October 24, 2003

Vivienne Vassell
Influence of Place on the environmental attitudes of children in Jamaica.
November 25, 2003

Dr Maureen Samms-Vaughan
Jamaican children’s reports of corporal punishment at home and at school
February 27, 2004

Dr Polly Bowes-Howell
Grade 1 interventions to improve student readiness level
April 2, 2004
The UNESCO/Child Focus II Project supported Regional Teleconferences using UWIDEC with Early Childhood/Parenting Colleagues. Three teleconferences were held over the period August 2003 to July 2004. These teleconferences remain integral to the regional work of CCDC in capacity building in early childhood development, serving as platforms for feedback on proposed project activities, planning mechanisms for regional events/workshops, and opportunities for discussion of topics of regional relevance to ECD colleagues.

For each teleconference, an associated newsletter was prepared which was posted on the website.

1. June 25 2003
Updates from ECD Associations in the Region
Presenters: Executives from six national ECD associations
There was participation from 6 countries: Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados, St. Lucia, Montserrat and Grenada.
This UWIDEC teleconference was a follow-up to the workshop held in Trinidad, in March 2003, for Association Leaders.

2. 1 Oct and 5 Nov 2003
Conflict Resolution (2-day) Workshop
Presenters: Donna Parchment and Paul Hines
Over 80 colleagues from 16 countries participated (Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago).
This workshop was offered in response to requests from ECD association leaders and was facilitated by the Dispute Resolution Foundation.

3. 2 June 2004.
Presentation of the case study on Financial Mobilization and Sustainability in the National Association for Early Childhood Care and Development of Trinidad and Tobago (NAFECCD).
Presenter Veni Apwann
Five countries participated.

The Child Focus II Project Regional workshop on Learning Goals and Outcomes in Early Childhood was held in Bridgetown, Barbados between March 10th -13th, 2004. Two officials representing each of 18 CARICOM Governments participated. Presenters included Dr. Donna Chin Fatt, Vice Principal of St. Josephs Teachers’ College, Jamaica; Dr. Rose Davies, Institute of Education, University of the West Indies; Dr. Maureen Samms-Vaughan, Head of the Section of Child Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of the West Indies and Sian Williams, Project technical director, Child Focus II Project. Sandra Hooper, President of the
Guyana Early Childhood Association provided expert support in the field of learning from birth to three years of age and Heather Gallimore, Project technical assistant organized the logistics of the event. The workshop programme was conceived and facilitated by Sian Williams, Project technical director and Leon Charles, Development Consultant. Outcomes include the groundbreaking Regional Framework for Learning Outcomes for Children from Birth to Three Years of Age with national plans of action for early childhood curriculum development in 18 countries.

The needs assessment of children in early childhood affected by HIV/AIDS in Western Jamaica was concluded in October 2003 with feedback seminars (October 21st) and workshops (October 22nd) in the participating communities and at Sam Sharpe Teachers’ College. Janet Brown and Sian Williams for CCDC collaborated with Hope Ramsay and Dr Sanjana Bhardwaj of UWI/HARP to take forward recommendations arising into the policy of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture. UWIHARP is incorporating lessons learned into curricula being developed for the relevant teachers colleges’ programmes.

**Collaboration and Public Service**

The staff of the SSCS continued to collaborate with a number of external agencies. Janet Brown served as member on the following Jamaican committees until 31.01.04:

- Early Childhood Development (ECD) Integration Advisory Committee: Government and NGO task force on ECD advising on proposed legislation and new regulations, and on pilot programmes of integrated systems in two parishes.

- PIOJ Steering Committee for monitoring the status and well being of very young children

- Early Childhood Education Fund: reviewing requests for funding from the Education portion of Lotteries funds.

- Steering Committee for the MOEYC Enhancing Basic Schools Project (four-year project of GOJ and Caribbean Development Bank)

- Coordinating Committee for National Plan of Action for Children, to develop five-year plan all services and programmes for children in Jamaica.

- Steering Committee for IDB-funded consultancy project with PIOJ on financing the early childhood sector.

The Caribbean Child Development Centre was represented through the Tutor Coordinator by Sian Williams on the following bodies until May 2004:

JAMAICA: Lead Group, Training and Certification Sub Committee, Early Childhood Commission /National Council for Technical Vocational Education and Training, Jamaica


INTERNATIONAL: Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development. (Regional representative for the Caribbean).

INTERNATIONAL: Child Watch International. (Key Institution).

INTERNATIONAL: Children’s Rights Universities Network, University of Ghent. (Member)

Julie Meeks Gardner (T-C since March 15, 2003) has undertaken the following representation:

JAMAICA: Dudley Grant Memorial Trust Upgrading of Resource Centres Project Enhancement of Basic Schools Project of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture

INTERNATIONAL: Childwatch International Research Network Consultative Group on Early Childhood Education, Care and Development

Janet Brown, Sian Williams and Julie Meeks Gardner are members of the Children’s Issues Coalition (ChIC), a group of academics at the UWI, Mona campus who are striving to enable more integrated research and teaching as well as outreach services and dissemination of research findings, in areas of child development and child behaviour. We are currently working on 2 major projects: an annual journal entitled *Caribbean Childhoods*, for which we obtained a grant from UNICEF of US$15,000, and the development of a database of research on children’s issues for which we obtained a grant from the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica of JA$2,286,387. Volume 1 of the Journal, which focused on Early Childhood Issues, was launched on October 6th, 2004 at a function at the CCDC which was well attended by over 100 persons.

Volume 2, which focuses on Children at Risk, has had a number of papers submitted. These have been reviewed and the corrected manuscripts returned for final editing and publishing. Publication is expected by late 2004. Volume 3 will be a special issue on Indicators and Screening Instruments of Children’s Wellbeing which is being funded by UNICEF.

A meeting was held on September 12th, 2003 with Dr Alison Anderson, CEO of the Child Development Agency to discuss possible collaboration between her service delivery agency and the Children’s Issues Coalition. As a result, her research requirements and publication of the experiences of the development of the agency are being considered.

Members of staff continued to provide public service through representation on a range of boards and organizations.
Janet Brown
Appointed Commissioner and Member of the Early Childhood Commission, Government of Jamaica during the period. She serves as Chair of the Public Education Subcommittee of the Commission.

Serves as treasurer for Parenting Partners, a not-for-profit consortium of parenting specialists producing materials for regional use.

Julie Meeks Gardner
Malnourished Children’s Foundation (Secretary)
National Food and Nutrition Coordinating Committee (Chairman)
Planning Institute of Jamaica Research Policy Agenda Committee (Member of the Technical Advisory Committee)
Early Childhood Commission Research and Data Management Subcommittee (member)

Administration and Plant
The administrative capacity of the centre will benefit with the completion of the studies in the EMBA programme of the UWI School of Business undertaken by Office Manager Marva Campbell since March 2004.

Safety and Emergency planning consultations were held with UWI Safety and Emergency Management consultants. A plan for upgrading these systems is being implemented.

A resource room has been refurbished and four computer work stations created in the former library space. Copies of reports and publications of the CCDC and other relevant materials have been placed in the room. A proposal has been developed for the cataloguing and arrangement of all written, audio and visual materials in the library.

The CCDC hosts two entities on the compound. ‘Kids on Campus’ is an independent preschool and aftercare facility which provides care for approximately 40 children aged 3 months to 6 years. Children are drawn from the UWI community as well as the surrounding communities of August Town and Hermitage.

Parenting Partners is an NGO which focuses on developing and supporting interventions to improve parenting skills. Two major projects which are ongoing include the revision of the widely used manual ‘Pathways to Parenting: A Caribbean Approach’, and the Regional Radio Project (RRP) which is encouraging the use of radio in broadcasting parenting messages and experiences to less accessible communities in the Caribbean. RRP is being funded by the Bernard van Leer Foundation with a working relationship and technical assistance from CCDC and CARIMAC.
Publications

Refereed:


Departmental publications

Caribbean Link, the newsletter of the regional early childhood network, was published by CCDC in 2 issues this year. Copies were placed on the website (www.uwi.centre/caribecd). UNESCO and IDB continued to assist with the costs of this publication.

Caribbean LINK, issue #10 (Aug-Sept. 2003)
Feature: Updates from ECD Associations in the Region
Other contents:
CARICOM ECD Working Group, Communication - the Key to Our Success,
CECA update,
ECE - the Mother-Tongue Dilemma
‘Your Website’

Caribbean LINK, issue #11 (Dec. 2003)

1.1 Reports, monographs, pamphlets, books by author, title, place of publication, publisher, year of publication

Reports:


Leon Charles, Sian Williams. Report of the workshop to develop a regional framework for learning outcomes and goals in early childhood, Child Focus II Project/IADB funded May 2004

Donna Chin Fatt: Reports of the status of early childhood curriculum development and learning outcomes in Jamaica, Barbados, Belize, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and
Tobago and the Bahamas. Reports of study visits undertaken for the Child Focus II Project/IADB funded, October 2003 to March 2004.

Donna Chin Fatt: *Regional curriculum guidance for learning in early childhood from birth to eight years of age.* Child Focus II Project/IADB funded, July 2004

Roxanne Chipman. *Standards for pre-school education and day-care in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.* Child Focus II Project/IADB funded, July 2004

Heather Gallimore *Establishing an Early Childhood Association in Belize.* Child Focus II Project/IADB funded, December 2003

Sharon Geerlings Headley. *Legislative amendments, Regulatory Framework and Standards for early childhood development in Suriname.* Child Focus II Project/IADB funded, June 2004


Veni Apwann: *Finance mobilization and sustainability in the National Early Childhood Association, Trinidad and Tobago.* (Four progress reports and a case study), Child Focus II Project/IADB funded, 2003-4

Sian Williams. *A model for financing and investment in early childhood development in the Caribbean,* Child Focus II Project/Inter American Development Bank (IADB), 2004 (with Kevin Morrison and Pauline Watson-Campbell)


Forthcoming publications

Brown J. “Fatherwork in the Caribbean” in Men and Gender Equity, OXFAM, UK


Kruszewski K, Meeks Gardner JM. Breastfeeding patterns among 6 week old infants at the UHWI. West Indian Medical Journal.


The main departmental programmes and projects were the Child Focus II project 2001-2004 funded by Inter-American Development Bank in collaboration with the Governments of Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, with participation in selected activities by Haiti.

Technical Director: Sian Williams
Technical Assistant: Heather Gallimore

Purpose: To strengthen early childhood development in IDB member countries
Nature: Provision of technical assistance to seven governments, through national consultancies and a series of regional workshops
Funding: Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), USD700,000

Activities in 2003-4:

- Legislation and standards developed and completed for the early childhood sector in Suriname and the Bahamas
- National survey undertaken of the quality of learning environments in early childhood centres in the Bahamas
- Belize Early Childhood Association established
- Case study on finance mobilization and sustainability in an early childhood association, Trinidad and Tobago, completed
- Country case studies on ECD financing and sustainability in Suriname and Guyana completed
- Foundation stage curriculum and early learning goals for early childhood in the Caribbean completed (with the participation in a regional workshop of 18 countries with additional funding by Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and UNICEF Caribbean Area Office (CAO))
- Masters in Leadership in early childhood (on line) with the Institute of Education, UWI approved and launched.

Research Programmes
Aggression and Violence in Jamaican Children  
Principal Investigator: Julie Meeks Gardner  
Funded by CHASE Foundation (J$3,548,000) and Caribbean Health Research Council (US$20,000) with assistance from the British Council (Jamaica)

This ongoing research programme has been brought to the CCDC by Julie Meeks Gardner. Future projects being planned include the assessment of behavioural interventions among basic school children and nutritional interventions among young offenders.

Two further research programmes are being planned:
- HIV/AIDS and Child Development
- Development of Disabled Children

Visitors to the Centre
The following visitors to the Centre were welcomed during the period:

Patricia Smith, McMaster University . PhD student in Anthropology undertaking field research in primary and early childhood settings in Oracabessa. September 2003.

Priya Anoaker, PhD Social Work PhD student from India, use of library/resource room facilities at CCDC, March to June 2004

Diane Lemieux, Bernard van Leer Foundation, Jan 2004, regarding publication and upcoming research on fathers.

Awards and Courtesies

Janet Brown was awarded a special award by UNICEF Jamaica for outstanding service on the occasion of her retirement October 2003.

We wish to acknowledge the special courtesy extended by the Ministry of Education, Barbados, which hosted a special event to welcome participants from eighteen countries to the Child Focus II Project Regional Workshop on Learning Outcomes and Goals in Early Childhood Development on Tuesday 11th May 2004 at the Pom Marine Hotel, Barbados.

Conference presentations

March 10th -13th, 2004. Child Focus II Project Regional workshop on Learning Goals and Outcomes in Early Childhood

Early Childhood Development: Learning opportunities in the first three years  
Learning outcomes for children three to five years by Dr. Rose Davies
The environments and resources that support learning outcomes by Sian Williams

Practitioner and teacher training to support learning outcomes by Dr. Rose Davies


Newspaper articles featuring work of the Centre
